



FEMA

Joint Information
Center Disaster
News



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Federal Funding Available for Levee Repair

SACRAMENTO – Public agencies and special districts that responded to the June 3 Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta levee break and flooding may be eligible for federal disaster assistance, according to officials with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES).

At the request of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, President George W. Bush issued a major disaster declaration for San Joaquin County on June 30. Based on that declaration, the state and local governments including certain reclamation districts can apply for reimbursement of eligible costs for responding to the break. FEMA reimbursement covers emergency response costs, debris removal, emergency protective measures related to the floods, and the repair or replacement of damaged public facilities.

"We are making every effort to expedite the process," said Federal Coordinating Officer William Carwile. "Our goal is to have initial payments in the recipients hands within 30 days, if possible."

The OES administers FEMA's Public Assistance program that provides grants on a 75/25 percent cost-sharing basis. The remaining 25 percent is shared between the State of California and local entities.

FEMA and OES representatives briefed potential applicants at meetings in Sacramento, July 12, and Stockton, July 15. To date, 20 agencies have indicated they plan to request federal reimbursement.

"We are actively working with potential applicants to move the process along," said Paul Jacks, OES State Coordinating Officer. "The sooner we receive the applications, the sooner we can distribute the money."

The federal major disaster declaration also triggers the availability of funding for hazard mitigation grants. Working in cooperation with the state, FEMA can fund

cost-effective mitigation measures that would reduce or eliminate the threat of future damage to a facility damaged during the disaster. The program may provide a state with up to 7.5 percent of the total disaster grants awarded by FEMA.

In addition to the FEMA grants, other federal programs are designed to help private non-profit organizations and farmers following a disaster.

· U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Low-Interest Disaster Loans

Private non-profit (PNP) organizations that provide essential government services and suffered damages due to the disaster may be eligible for low-interest disaster loans from SBA. PNPs must first contact FEMA to determine if they provide critical or non-critical services. PNPs that provide non-critical services must apply for a disaster loan from SBA. If SBA cannot approve a loan to meet all of the PNP's needs, SBA will refer the PNP back to FEMA.

· United States Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency Loans

The United States Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency may provide emergency loans to farmers in a declared disaster area if they suffered at least a 30 percent loss in crop production or physical loss to livestock, livestock products, real estate, or chattel property. Recipients can borrow up to \$500,000 of actual losses. Loans normally must be repaid within one to seven years.

OES coordinates state-level emergency preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation for a wide range of natural and human-caused emergencies and disasters. As part of its responsibilities, OES' Disaster Assistance Division manages state and federal grants provided to local communities for disaster mitigation and recovery.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property. SBA helps homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes, and private non-profit organizations fund repairs or rebuilding efforts, and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster-damaged personal property. These disaster loans cover uninsured and uncompensated losses and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations.

On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders, and manages Citizen Corps, the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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More disaster information can be found on the OES Web site by clicking [San Joaquin County Levee Break and Flooding](#) and on FEMA's Web site at

<http://www.fema.gov>. Information is also available through the FEMA 24-hour fax-on-demand service by calling (202) 646-FEMA.